

Chicago Tribune, October 23, 2007

For drivers accustomed to backups on the Illinois Highway 60 bridge where it crosses Interstate Highway 94, beware: It's about to get worse.

The good news is that an \$18.5 million road-widening project scheduled to begin next month is expected to ease congestion at one of Lake County's most heavily traveled interchanges when construction is finished in spring 2009. During construction, Illinois 60 will be reduced to one lane in each direction.

U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk (R-Ill.) said Monday that the federal government will pay \$9 million toward the project, with the rest of the tab to be picked up by the Illinois Department of Transportation, Illinois State Toll Highway Authority, and local governments and businesses.

About 36,000 vehicles pass through the interchange daily, sometimes leading to a miles-long backup on the stretch of road that connects Lake Forest and the busy shopping district in Vernon Hills, officials said.

"If you are stuck on the ... bridge after 3:30 p.m., you might as well get a hotel," Kirk said.

Drivers can expect construction to begin in early November, with the bulk of the project to be completed by December 2008, Kirk said. Landscaping and other detail work should be finished by May 2009.

The project will add four lanes to the bridge, two of which will be used as through lanes and two as turn lanes. Heading in either direction on the bridge, drivers will be able to access two left-turn lanes.